



SOLAR DECATHLON

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Energy Secretary Bodman Opens Solar Decathlon Competition on National Mall

Many Homes to Take on New Lives after Solar Decathlon

WASHINGTON, DC – Secretary of Energy Samuel W. Bodman officially opened the 2005 Solar Decathlon today on the National Mall. During the event, 18 teams from 13 states, Puerto Rico, Canada, and Spain will compete to determine which house best blends aesthetics and modern conveniences with maximum energy production and optimal efficiency.

“These homes are helping to bring the promise of solar power to reality,” Secretary Bodman said. “It’s inspiring to see these young people work together through the design and building stages of these next generation homes. I want to congratulate all of the teams who are competing and note that the awards they win here won’t compare to the prize of knowing, down the road, that their work helped strengthen our world’s energy supply with more available use of solar power.”

The teams will be judged in 10 areas encompassing architecture, livability, comfort, power generation for space heating and cooling, water heating, and powering lights and appliances. Each solar house must also produce enough “extra” power for an electric car. The winning team will be announced October 14. The Decathlon runs from Oct. 6-14, and the homes will be open to the public through Oct. 16.

Many of the teams participating in the Solar Decathlon hope their houses will serve a far greater purpose beyond that of the competition. For the University of Maryland, the team plans to return their house to the community. After the competition, the team will take its solar home to Red Wiggler Community Farm in Clarksburg, Md. Founded in 1996, the Red Wiggler Community Farm provides jobs for adults with developmental disabilities through the business of growing and selling high-quality produce. The Maryland home will serve as housing for staff and a living exhibit of solar power.



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“It is exciting to be partnering with an organization that benefits the greater community,” said Assistant Project Manager Najahyia Chinchilla. “Red Wiggler is great because it addresses so many issues affecting our community and really looks at what can be done locally by a few people that care.”

The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth is donating their 800 square-foot house to Habitat for Humanity, where the team hopes it can help a family affected by hurricane Katrina. After the competition, the house will be shipped from the National Mall to Louisiana.

Consistent with their environmentally-friendly design, students of the University of Colorado plan to bring their solar house to a community in Longmont, Colo., where it will become part of “Project New Town,” an urban neighborhood which features a variety of unique architecture.

Several of the teams will return their homes to their respective campuses, including Cornell University, University of Missouri-Rolla, Crowder College, New York Institute of Technology and Florida International University. The houses will serve as learning centers for future school projects and offer educational examples in sustainable and energy-efficient technologies.

Visitors to the Mall are encouraged to participate in energy-efficient workshops, tour the houses and explore educational exhibits. Except for Oct. 12, when the houses will be closed for competition purposes, the solar village will be open for house tours from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. weekdays and from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. weekends.

The primary sponsor of the Solar Decathlon is DOE’s Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, with its National Renewable Energy Laboratory and private-sector sponsors the American Institute of Architects, the National Association of Home Builders, BP Solar, the DIY (Do It Yourself) Network and Sprint Nextel.



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Editors' notes: For more information and a complete list of teams, go to www.solardecathlon.org. Professional high-resolution JPEG photos with photo captions are also available at the Solar Decathlon web site, www.solardecathlon.org or <https://www.eere-pmc.energy.gov/sd05> and will be updated daily during the competition. Please contact John Horst at 303/434-2823 or john.horst@go.doe.gov for questions about photos.

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